



Friday, June 19, 2020

MESSAGE FROM OBM DIRECTOR KIM MURNIEKS

Every day brings news and data that affect our financial well-being, from markets and management to the budgets of Ohio's citizens and communities. During this global pandemic, it is increasingly clear that leaders need current information available to effectively administer the taxpayers' public offices and works.

In December 2019, Governor Mike DeWine convened his Cabinet outside the Statehouse for the first time, and in the Mahoning Valley. During that same week, I hosted a roundtable of local fiscal officials from the region in Columbiana County. One of the key results of this session was that *The CFO Newsflash* newsletter I implemented on the state level was a crucial and relevant tool to conduct the work of public finance. And that a "local governments version" of this ideal communication was needed and requested by our colleagues. I am grateful for that winter day in northeast Ohio and the local and state leaders who have stepped up and agreed to partner with OBM by serving on our editorial board of *Ohio Connects*.

Ohio Connects will include practical content and timely information. Please call or email our team and me any time. I hope *Ohio Connects* directly supports your critically important, frontlines job!

AROUND THE STATE

CARES Act - Coronavirus Relief Fund Local Government Assistance Program

The Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM) will be disbursing \$350 million in federal CARES Act *Coronavirus Relief Funding* to counties to distribute to cities, villages, and townships next week. In accordance with the provisions of Ohio HB 481, the funds will be allocated using the Local Government Fund methodology. To receive funding, each local jurisdiction must pass a resolution agreeing to comply with the provisions of the federal CARES Act, send copies of that resolution to your county and OBM, and register in OBM's grants management portal by providing your local government's contact for the grant and

your DUNS number. Additional information, including the portal to register, can be accessed via the Ohio Grants Partnership website <http://Grants.ohio.gov>. Guidance and draft resolutions can be found under the Attachments section of the [Funding Opportunity](#). Please contact OBM at grants@obm.ohio.gov with questions or for additional information. Resolutions also can be emailed to OBM at the same email address.

OBM will be hosting a webinar on June 24, 2020 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. to discuss the Coronavirus Relief Fund Local Assistance Program as a result of HB 481. This session will provide an overview of the process as directed in HB 481, discuss the fund's requirements and eligible uses, introduce recipients to the Ohio Grants Partnership and available resources, and provide answers to some frequently asked questions that have been received.

Details and registration for the webinar are available

at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/coronavirus-relief-fund-local-assistance-guidance-hb-481-tickets-110003547572>.

The session will be recorded and available on the Ohio Grants Partnership website (<http://Grants.ohio.gov>) a few days after the event.

OBM Response to COVID-19

Please see the attached Narrative on how the Ohio Office of Budget and Management is responding to and working closely with all levels of government during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Monthly Financial Reports (MFR)

The Office of Budget and Management publishes the Monthly Financial Report to the Office of Governor Mike DeWine. This detailed monthly report provides an economic overview of the previous month's performance. To view the June 10, 2020 report, please click [here](#).



Preliminary Revenue Data (PRD)

The Preliminary Revenue Data is released prior to the Monthly Financial Report, which provides a high-level overview of revenue received by the state for the previous month. To view the latest PRD dated June 8, 2020, click [here](#).

GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

Ohio Grants Partnership

On April 21, 2020, Director Murnieks released the Ohio Grants Partnership policy which formally established the Ohio Grants Partnership team within OBM. The Ohio Grants Partnership's mission is to maximize the value of grant funding by strengthening

accountability, transparency, collaboration, fiscal integrity, and utilizing innovation to create efficiencies.

The efforts of the Ohio Grants Partnership had already begun prior to the pandemic; however, now more than ever, it is critical to streamline implementation of COVID-19 grants, ensure oversight and coordination of applications to maximize the State of Ohio's ability to receive grant-related revenue, build relationships with our federal and local partners, and reduce redundant administrative processes.

The initial focus of the Ohio Grants Partnership will be federal grants related to COVID response and recovery. When fully implemented, the grants partnership will serve as a centralized repository for grants-related resources and funding opportunities including the administration of a centralized website, to make it easier for local governments and other subrecipients to find funding information and ultimately, to apply for grants. The partnership's website, grants.ohio.gov, has recently been launched and offers helpful resources related to grants administration. As the site is a work in progress, please check back often for updates.

Grant Training Now Available in Ohio Learn

Many of you may be receiving federal funds for the first time, or receiving a larger amount and maybe from a different source as a result of COVID-19. The Ohio Grants Partnership recently released its first training course: Managing Federal Funds for COVID-19. The course is intended to be a high-level overview of grants administration, with some details specific for COVID-19 funding, to assist those that are new to grants administration or who have limited experience. To access the course, please visit the partnership website at <https://grants.ohio.gov/helpfulresources.aspx#helpful-resources-citizen-grant-training>. Details can be found on how to take the course in

Ohio Learn for credit or the course can be viewed directly as well. Ohio Learn offers the ability to retain training transcripts, which can demonstrate grant professional development for staff and could assist when applying for federal funds from the state.



Grant Management Best Practices

It is very easy to compare the current federal grants situation to the times of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Although different circumstances, the same situation of large amounts of federal funds distributed quickly with reporting regulations and audits to follow. Many local entities may not have received, or received

very little federal funds related to ARRA. In addition, ARRA did not have a presidentially declared emergency at the same time activating the Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance Program. As your government starts to receive federal funds from multiple sources, it is important to keep several things in mind:

- Ensure funds related to COVID legislation are kept separate for reporting purposes. It is a best practice to establish a separate fund or unique identifier in your accounting system to track your activity for each grant award. Federal funds should be treated as Special Revenue and should not be deposited into your General Revenue Fund. Ensure all revenue and expenditures related to the grant award stay in the same fund and have the unique identifier if established.
- With multiple funding sources that support the same or similar costs, it is imperative that costs are not submitted to more than one federal program.
- Carefully review the guidance from your awarding agency for allowable costs, restrictions on use of funds, match or maintenance of effort requirements, and reporting requirements. Be prepared to support activity, to include reporting such as job numbers or other programmatic activity. Make sure you support your activity reported, to include job numbers or other programmatic activity. Make sure you retain records for future audit purposes.
- Make sure your government fiscal office is reconciling financial and programmatic reported amounts to supporting documentation. Again, make sure all information is retained for future audit purposes.
- Refer to the uniform guidance (2 CFR 200) in addition to program specific guidance often. Always follow the most restrictive requirement (state, local, federal) to ensure you are always in compliance.
- It is important to note that the increase in funding for COVID could have an influence on whether or not your entity is required to have a single audit (federal expenditures over \$750,000 in a fiscal year), or if you already qualify for a single audit then which programs are audited.

DUNS Number and SAM Registration

In order to receive federal funds, an entity must have a DUNS number and be actively registered in the System for Award Management (SAM). The Ohio Grants Partnership has provided helpful instructions to help those that are new to this process navigate this requirement. See the Ohio Grants Partnership website at <https://grants.ohio.gov/helpfulresources.aspx#helpful-resources-DUNS-SAM-registration> for more details. If your government is expecting to receive funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund as part of SB 310, it is important to obtain a DUNS number if your government does not have one and become actively registered in SAM. This process could

take a few weeks so any government anticipating funds should start this process as soon as possible.

Beginning in December 2020, the federal government is moving away from utilizing the DUNS # and will be assigning Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI). UEI's will be automatically assigned to all SAM registrations (active and inactive) and legacy DUNS #'s will be phased out. As the Ohio Grants Partnership becomes aware of information specific to this process it will be shared on our website and in future newsletters.

SAM Registration Alert

Be aware that fraudsters are looking for all angles to take advantage of the current pandemic and the increase in federal funds being distributed. A federal granting agency alerted the State of a fraudulent website that has the look and feel of the System for Award Management (SAM) site. Be sure to stay clear of this fraudulent website: <https://sam.gov.org>. Please share this information with others in your government as you deem appropriate.

It also is important to note that it is free to renew your SAM registration. Carefully review all expiration e-mail notices that indicate your SAM is about to expire. Do not follow any redirect links, you should go directly to <https://sam.gov> to renew. OBM has been alerted to a company in Florida that sends e-mails from Renewal Support (info@renewalsupport.com) and indicates your SAM registration is about to expire. The e-mail has information in areas like the subject line that are gleaned from the public search in SAM.gov. This information may make a reader believe it is an official e-mail from SAM, but it will redirect you to a professional renewal service to update your registration for a fee. Updating the SAM is easy and free, so please do not pay someone to update your information.

Ohio Grants Summit

Please join us for the first Ohio Grants Summit on September 15, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This unique opportunity provides a day of information sharing, discussion, and learning from grant management professionals and state agency representatives. Due to the current pandemic situation, the summit was moved to September 15 and has become virtual. Participants that already registered were notified and will not need to re-register. Please see the attached flyer promoting the event. Registration is available at <https://ohio-grants-summit-2020.eventbrite.com>. If you have any questions, please contact the Ohio Grants Partnership at grants@obm.ohio.gov.

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